

LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS

Working Without Barriers

Improving employment opportunities for people with disability

Policy Position

THE FACTS

- 1 in 5 Australians have disability¹
- Around 93% of people with disability of working age report experiencing barriers in gaining employment.
- Less than half of people with disability of working age are employed
- People with disability are vastly under-represented in leadership positions, and jobs are often short-term.

Unemployment of people with disability is a pressing social, economic and human rights issue but it is an issue we can disrupt and change. Life Without Barriers supports Australia's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, Article 27, which recognises the rights of persons with disabilities to work on an **equal basis** with others.

Disrupting the barriers to employment that people with disability experience is not a benevolent act but is in fact critical to the fabric of society. The effective and fair functioning of our labour market, the housing market, industry and the economy rely on active engagement in employment. Today, far too many people with disability experience barriers to employment but we can work together to change that.

All Australians with disability have the right to wage equity, economic security and a fulfilling career. People with disability should have

access to ongoing, meaningful, rewarding career development pathways that align with their interests, enable financial security and which include opportunities to participate in or transition to open or self-employment.

Our workplaces and communities benefit from the unique skills, perspectives, innovative problem-solving capabilities and experience people with disability bring to the workplace and organisations can benefit from their significant contribution to increased workforce productivity.

But we can't just focus on entry level roles. The under-representation of leaders with disability currently hinders Australian workplaces. We recognise the invaluable role of diverse leadership including people with disability as an important priority for our workplaces and economy.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2022) People with disability in Australia 2022, catalogue number DIS 72, AIHW, Australian Government.

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We Commit To:

Improving employment opportunities for people with disability by leveraging resources, knowledge, experience, and scale to enhance our workforce practices and to lobbying and encouraging all Australian employers to do the same.

Ensuring that at least 15% of our employees, at all levels of our organisation, comfortably and openly identify as people with disability and that of these, at least 3% identify as having an intellectual disability to reflect better the population we serve.

Supporting and empowering people with disability to bring their authentic selves to the workplace by creating an accessible work environment and ensuring employees feel comfortable requesting workplace adjustments.

Ensuring people with disability have genuine choice and control over their employment and career development pathways and they can enjoy meaningful work that meets their expectations and fulfils their potential.

Increasing the representation of leaders with disability at the Executive and Board levels and encouraging other organisations to do the same.

Related Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with Life Without Barriers **Access Inclusion and Employment Plan (AIEP)** and **Strategy 2025**.